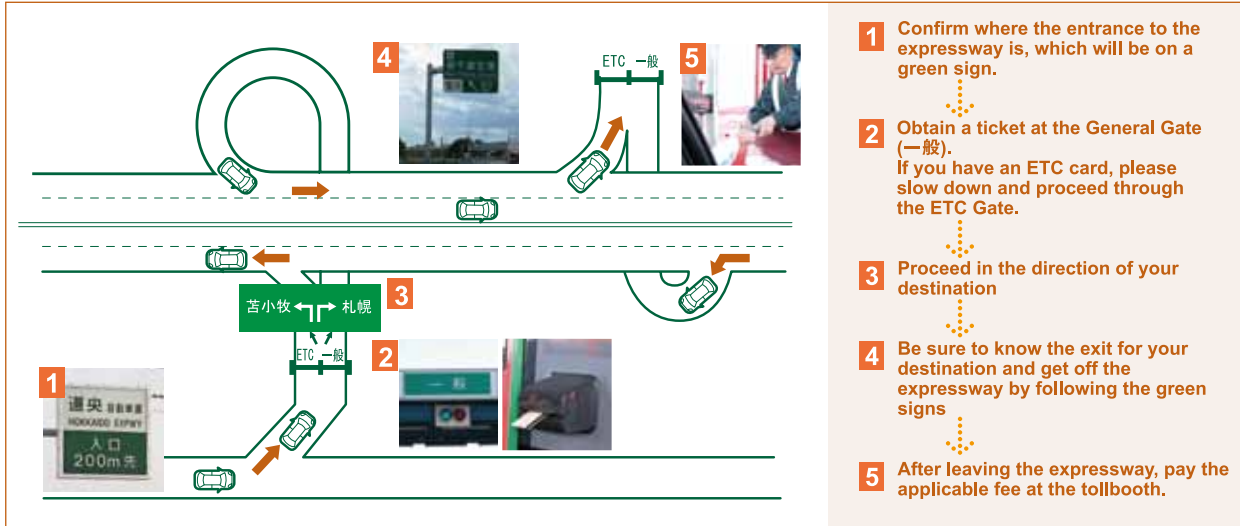


3-3. Use expressways!

Since Hokkaido is big, it is often necessary to travel large distances to move from one place to the next. In particular, if your plans include driving across some large cities with many traffic lights and heavy traffic, using expressways will lead to substantial time savings. Use them wisely.

If you make sure in advance that you know: 1. Your present location, 2. The location of the entrance, and 3. The name of the exit you need to take, you will be alright.



Where is the entrance?

Enter the expressway at the entrance referred to as IC (interchanges) such as "New Chitose Airport IC." All the road signs for local streets are blue in color, however, since all the locations for interchanges are marked in green, look out for green signs while driving.



Which gate should I use?

There are general lanes, ETC lanes and dual use lanes at the entrance. If you have an ETC card, please use the blue ETC Lane. If not, please use the green General Lane.



Which way should I go?

After passing the gate, the road will split in 2 directions. You must choose the lane that will take you in the direction of where you wish to go. As the signs show the names of cities, it is a good idea to check the geographical location of the major city and IC (interchange) in advance. If, by any chance, you find yourself heading in the opposite direction from where you intended to go, stay calm, get off the expressway at the next IC and start over again.



ETC(Electronic Toll Collection)

An ETC Card is used exclusively to pay expressway tolls and other related fees. It identifies the payer and the payment is automatically charged to the user's credit card or bank account that has been registered with the ETC system.

Be careful of the ETC lanes as only cars that are set up to use the ETC Card system can use these lanes. Some rental car companies offer an ETC card rental service together with the car. If you are planning to use expressways, it's worth making inquiries.



An example of an ETC Card
高速人CARD
"E-NEXCO pass"

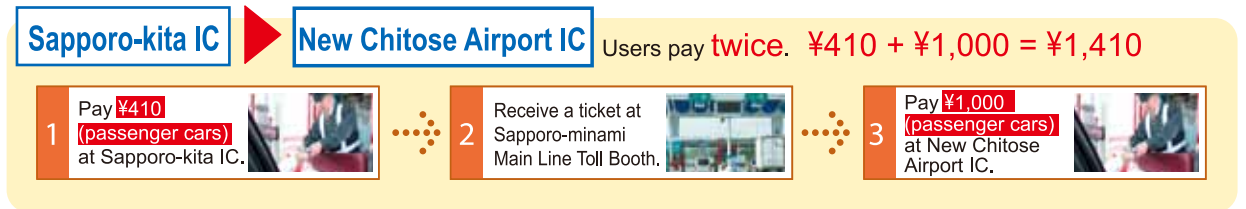
The flat rate toll used in Sapporo must be pre-paid!

At the IC entrances in Sapporo, a toll booth and not a ticket dispenser will greet you immediately. The system here calls for a prepayment of the flat fee (¥410 for passenger cars).

※ Rates of March 2017



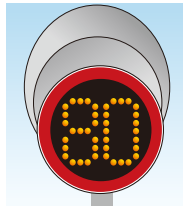
This is how the tolls in Sapporo work!



※ Rates of March 2017

Speed Limit

Speed limits are variable and will change depending on the weather and/or road conditions. If there are no signs, the speed limit is 100 km/hr. Always check the speed limit signs while driving.



Toll Booths

To use expressways, users obtain a ticket from a dispenser at the entrance gate and pay the applicable toll, which varies by the distance traveled, to an attendant at the exit. To pay, cash or the following credit cards are accepted (no need to sign the transaction slip):

JCB Card, NICOS Card, American Express Card, Diners Club Card, VISA Card and MasterCard.

Drive in the Cruising Lane (Keep Left)!

A 2-lane expressway is divided into the "cruising lane" and "passing lane." Under normal conditions, stay in the cruising lane on the left hand side (keep left). Only pass in the right-hand lane. As this road traffic (expressway) regulation is strictly enforced, it is advisable to return to the cruising lane after having passed another vehicle.



Quick Tip

With the Hokkaido Expressway Pass, enjoy unlimited use of Hokkaido's expressways, for one fixed price. When you use ETC, there's no need to come to a complete stop at toll booths. And you need not worry about communication in Japanese!

East Nippon Expressway Company ~ Hokkaido Expressway Pass.
(Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Korean)

http://www.driveplaza.com/trip/drawari/hokkaido_expass/en.html

[Standard Expressway Toll Chart]

http://www.driveplaza.com/trip/drawari/hokkaido_expass/pdf/normal_list_2015_en.pdf

3-4. How to use gas stations

gas stations are called “GA-SO-RI-N SU-TA-N-DO” in Japan. There have been problems due to confusion over the names of the various types of fuels, so learn what they are beforehand.

*The abbreviations GS for gas stations or SS for service stations will be used below.

Where are gas stations?

Gas stations can be commonly seen in urban areas or along the busy main roads, but they are rarely found once you are away from a city or along a road with very little traffic. There are more GS along highways with 2 or more lanes and other roads which large-sized vehicles such as trucks utilize. Regarding operating hours, you should be aware that while some GS are open 24 hours a day in urban areas, some gas stations in the countryside where there is little traffic may close after 18:00 during the week and may not be open at all on weekends. It is advisable to refuel frequently to prevent running out of gasoline. Keep a close eye on the amount in the tank, particularly if you are leaving an urban area.

These signs are the ones to look out for.

Signs of the major gasoline stand chains



ENEOS



IDEMITSU



SHELL



Exxon Mobile Group



COSMO

There are two types of gas stations.

There are two types of gas stations: a. “Full Service” where sales staff are always present and refuel for you and b. “Self Service” where you refuel your own car. Prices are slightly cheaper at self-service stands. At full service stands, all you have to do is to tell the staff what kind of gas you want and how much, either in liters or yen. If you want a full tank, just say “MA-N-TA-N” (full tank). The staff will refuel your car and offer services such as wiping your car’s windows. Every once in a while, you will be offered a free map or pack of tissues.

There are three types of fuel with two types of gasoline.

Fuel comes in three types including “HI OKU” (high octane), “regular” and “diesel.” Rental cars in Japan, for the most part, have gasoline engines and require “regular” gasoline. There are virtually no rental cars with diesel engines so under no circumstances should you use diesel fuel in a rental car. The car will not run if it has been filled up with diesel fuel. Additionally, gasoline sold in Japan is virtually all lead-free.

●Types of fuel (gasoline)

[Be careful not to confuse the gasoline types when refueling at a self-service stand!]

Generally speaking, “regular” means gasoline with an octane value of approximately 90, whereas, “Hi-Oku” (high octane) means gasoline with an octane value ranging between 98 and 100. Depending on the gas stations, “Hi-Oku” will have a unique product name such as “Premium,” “Super,” “F1,” “Vigo,” “Super Magnum” or “Shell Pura” that identifies the high octane gasoline as a product that improves fuel efficiency, ensures optimum engine performance and has energy and environmental qualities.



Quick Tip Identify the gasoline type by the color of the nozzle!
The nozzle of regular gasoline is RED.

The colors of gasoline stand nozzles are standardized across the country with red being “regular”, yellow being “high octane” and green being “diesel”.



English Signage	Taiwan	Hong Kong	Japan
Ultimate unleaded*	98無鉛汽油	高級汽油	ハイオク(HA-I-O-KU)
Unleaded	92無鉛汽油	普通汽油	レギュラー(RE-GYU-RA-A)
Diesel	柴油	柴油	軽油(KE-I-YU)

*Depending on the stand, “Ultimate unleaded” may be called “Plus unleaded,” “Super unleaded,” or “Premium unleaded.”

Refuel at a self-service gas station!

Here is an introduction about how to use self-service gas stations.

*Since the system may be different depending on the gas stations, we are giving you just one example here. At some gas stations, drivers pay the amount they owe for the gasoline to the staff at the register after refueling.



1

Stop your car alongside the petrol pump

Stop your car alongside the petrol pump keeping in mind which side your petrol tank is on. Make sure you know in advance which side your petrol tank is on. Park the car and turn off the engine.



2

Pay first

The fee should be paid beforehand, and cash and credit cards may be used.

(1) Cash: Insert the amount of money in the loading slot.

If a driver intends to refuel by 30 l, insert approximately 5,000 to 6,000 yen in bills. The cost is calculated by multiplying the unit costs (per liter) by the amount of gasoline (l) you used, and any change owed will be repaid into the coin return slot.

(2) Credit card: Activate the card by inserting it.

Insert your credit card into the appropriate slit and swipe it through the reader to load the data.



3

Select the gasoline type and the volume (number of liters)

Select the gasoline you wish to use by pushing the button for either premier, regular or light gasoline. Rental car users usually choose regular. The amount of petrol can be selected in two ways: choose one of 10 l, 20 l, 30 l ... 50 l options or select 1,000 yen, 2,000 yen, 3,000 yen ... 5,000 yen. If a driver wants to fill their car up, MA-N-TA-N should be selected.



4

Refueling

Open your petrol tank, pick up the nozzle for the gasoline you have selected, insert the nozzle into your tank firmly. There are usually three types of nozzles, so make sure you select the right type of petrol. Petrol types are always indicated by the same colors. Pull the lever to start refueling. When you have finished refueling, the petrol will stop automatically (The driver cannot pull the lever anymore).



5

Refueling completed.

Return the nozzle to the pump, and close the cap of your petrol tank firmly. Confirm the amount of gasoline and the charge shown on the display. Don't forget to pick up your change when you pay by cash. A receipt is printed out automatically for use of both cash and credit cards.



Quick Tip

Gasoline is dangerous!

Needless to say, fire, such as cigarettes, must be put out while you are filling your car. If gasoline catches fire, it will be very dangerous. As static electricity is also dangerous, do not forget to touch a static electricity removal sheet before starting to refuel. Use of mobile phones is also prohibited.



3-5. Be careful on snowy roads!

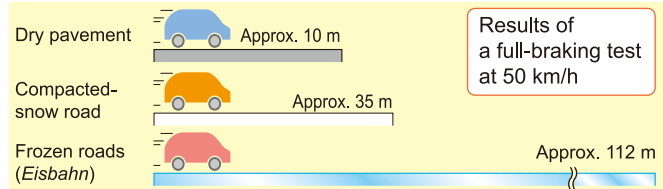
In Hokkaido, there are many winter activities, such as skiing, snowboarding and enjoying hot springs. Since the baggage required for these activities tends to be big, this is when rental cars can be very convenient. Winter roads, however, require advanced driving skills. Remember this basic knowledge to avoid serious trouble.



During the winter season, rental cars are always equipped with snow tires (for use on winter roads).

Slippery!

Compacted-snow roads are roads on which snow has fallen and then been pressed down and compacted by the movement of vehicles. Icy roads (*Eisbahn*) are those that are covered with thin ice formed by the refreezing of snow that fell and then melted on the roads, and these are especially slippery. Winter roads are very dangerous, because once a car skids, it is hard to control it.



(Extract from the website of Bureau of Lifestyle Safety, Bureau of Daily Life Safety, Daily Life Safety Promotion Division, Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government)



Don't be tricked by black icy roads (*Eisbahn*)!

Black *Eisbahn* is the worst type of icy roads. The road is covered with refrozen melted snow after rain. They look a little like wet roads, however, they are the slipperiest roads. Be very careful on black shiny roads in winter!

It's impossible to see!

Strong snowstorms can obstruct your view forward and snow being blown up from the road may also lead to low visibility. In addition, your range of vision may be reduced suddenly due to powdery snow blown up by oncoming trucks. Drivers just have to slow down in such situations.



Getting stuck!

If you drive into deep snow, you may not be able to get your car out. As far as is possible, find cleared roads or drive along wheel tracks left by other cars.



Things you must not do!

"Sudden braking," "Sudden acceleration," "Abrupt steering"
Your wheels will lock up (continue to slide without your tires moving) if you brake suddenly and your car get out of control so avoid this.



Quick Tip

Rental car users who intend to drive on winter roads for the first time should ask for a car equipped with ABS* when they make their reservation.

*ABS : This Anti-lock Brake System allows drivers to maintain steering control and avoid an accident even under heavy braking. However, it can also present disadvantages including increased braking distance on slippery surfaces, such as on ice, or smooth roads. ABS should not be solely relied upon .



Quick Tip

Are brakes broken?

Drivers, who use ABS (Anti-lock Brake System) for the first time, may be surprised with how they function. When wheels lock (continue to slide without your tires moving) on frozen roads, a loud sound can be heard at the moment of braking. This is the noise caused by the actuation of the device to control the brakes automatically. Drivers need not ease up on the brakes in a hurry.



Three key points to driving in winter

Drive slowly

The basic point is not to increase your speed. Driving slowly will give you time to avoid danger should the need arise.



Keep a safe distance between cars.

Keeping a safe distance between you and the car ahead gives you enough time to react and cope with emergency situations.



Understand the traffic conditions ahead

Many winter traffic accidents are caused by a delay in drivers understanding traffic conditions ahead. Pay attention to the brake lamps of the front two cars as well as traffic conditions ahead.



Learn how to use the engine to brake!

Cars accelerate automatically on down grades. In such cases, drivers should use not brakes but the engine to brake to control the speed. Using the engine to control speed is achieved by utilizing the power of the gears and changing the mode of the automatic transmission from D (drive) to S (or 3 or 2 according to models). Be sure to change the gear slowly while slowing the car down.



Tips about winter driving

Memo

1 Windshield wipers are frozen and they don't work

Wet wipers will get stuck to the windshield when frozen. You can avoid this by lifting the wiper arms off the windshield and leaving them like that overnight.



2 It is bright on sunny days

It is very dazzling when the sun reflects off the snow in winter. It is a good idea to carry sunglasses to combat the glare.



3 Clumps of snow come crashing down onto the car roof

Before driving be sure to remove any snow that has accumulated on the car roof. Otherwise clumps of snow may slide down the windshield without warning while driving and may block your view.



4 How slippery is it?

If you test your brakes while driving at a low speed and where you know it is safe to do so, you will learn how slippery the road is that day. Don't ever do this when there are cars in front of or behind you.



5 Melted snow from the car in front is showering your car

There are times when melted snow off the car in front or splashed up by oncoming vehicles covers your windshield and reduces visibility. Be sure to maintain a sufficient amount of windshield washer fluid in your car at all times. A winter formula that provides anti-freeze protection can be purchased at auto supply shops and home centers.



6 Everywhere is white and I cannot tell where the road is

In blizzard conditions, you cannot see what is ahead. Blowing snow caused by strong winds may reduce visibility. Drifting snow blown up by oncoming trucks will also obstruct your view for a moment. In these situations, remember to reduce your speed and drive slowly.



Stay home when the weather is bad!

In winter, weather conditions can change suddenly in some areas. Also, some areas do not have reception for cell phones. If you are stranded in one of these places you will be unable to call for help and will freeze in the extreme cold. It could take hours before the rescue party arrives and your life will be at risk. If bad weather is forecast therefore, do not go out even if this means you have to change your plans.



Quick Tip

If you become stranded...

- ① Do not leave your vehicle. (Risk of getting lost)
- ② Turn on the hazard lamps. (To let others know you car is stationary)
- ③ Call the police, fire bureau and/or road service providers for help. ⇒ See P. 48
- ④ Keep exhaust pipe clear of accumulated snow. (Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning)



Totally lost?
Help is here!



For more information on things to keep in mind about winter driving

- "Basic Knowledge of Road Safety," (Available in: Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese and Korean) issued by Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government

<http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ks/dms/safydrive/eng/index.htm>

